

## Journal Abstracts

The following abstracts are reprinted verbatim as they appear in the cited source.

**Van Hook, J., Glick, J.E., and Bean, F.D. 1999. Public assistance receipt among immigrants and natives: How the unit of analysis affects research findings. *Demography* 36(1):111-120.**

Differences between immigrant and native households in rates of welfare receipt depend on nativity differences in individual-level rates of receipt, in household size, in mean number of recipients in receiving households, and in household nativity composition. We present algebraic derivations of these relationships and use data from the 1990 and 1991 panels of the Survey of Income and Program Participation to examine empirically the extent to which levels of welfare receipt for immigrants and natives are sensitive to the use of household-, family-, or individual-level units of analysis of presentation. The findings show that nativity differences are statistically significant only at the level of larger units. The results also indicate that if immigrants and natives had identical living arrangements, immigrants' household-level receipt of Supplemental Security Income would significantly exceed natives' receipt even more than it actually does, but the nativity difference in receipt of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) would reverse directions. Moreover, the level of AFDC receipt of immigrant households falls significantly below that of native households when native-born children living in households headed by immigrants are treated as if they were foreign born.

**Roberts, J.A. 1998. Compulsive buying among college students: An investigation of its antecedents [sic], consequences, and implications for public policy. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs* 32(2):295-319.**

This study is an investigation of the incidence, antecedents, consequences, and public policy implications of compulsive buying among college students, a segment of the 44 million Americans born between 1965 and 1976, known as the Baby Bust generation. Previous research involving a broader range of adult consumers resulted in estimates of one to six percent classified as compulsive buyers. Using Faber and O'Guinn's (1992) clinical screener for compulsive buying, six percent of the college students sampled were classified as compulsive buyers, thus indicating the need for better understanding of compulsive buying behavior in this segment of the Baby Bust generation. Various contributing factors, including familial, psychological, sociological, and demographic influences, are detailed. Of particular interest is the relationship between credit card use and compulsive buying. Implications for consumer policy are discussed, and suggestions for research are offered.

**Coleman, M., Ganong, L.H., Killian, T., and McDaniel, A.K. 1999. Child support obligations: Attitudes and rationale. *Journal of Family Issues* 20(1):46-68.**

The attitudes of 160 men and 264 women randomly selected from five nonurban midwestern communities

were examined to (a) determine how much child support a nonresidential father is perceived to be obligated to pay; (b) assess how perceived obligations vary by gender or participant, legal custody arrangement, changes in parents' marital status, and father's financial status; and (c) explore the rationale used in making judgments about child support obligations. A vignette technique was used. Most participants (78%) indicated a child support amount that was less than state guidelines. Participants thought child support amounts should be reduced when mothers remarried and when fathers' financial status changed. Perceptions of child support obligations held by men and women did not differ, and custody arrangements were not related to attitudes about child support. Qualitative analyses of rationale underlying attitudes suggested that notions of fairness guided respondents' reasoning.

**Brown, R.B., Xu, X., and Toth, Jr., J.F. 1998. Lifestyle options and economic strategies: Subsistence activities in the Mississippi Delta. *Rural Sociology* 63(4):599-623.**

"Subsistence" and "informal economy" are contrasted in their utility as sociological concepts and their ability to explain a variety of activities in two rural Mississippi Delta communities. Literature on subsistence stresses that the desired outcome of participation is not an increase in income but the social rewards of participation itself. Two underlying dimensions of participation in these activities are documented through the literature and through a

---

confirmatory factor analysis of empirical data: life-style choice and economic strategy. These were constructed into indexes and examined individually and in combination as dependent variables using regressors at the community, household, and individual levels. Community ties were weakly associated with participation in such activities. Whites and those with higher incomes participated more in lifestyle choice oriented activities. Participation in general was statistically related to households needing less weekly income and being of larger size. Potential connections with persistent rural poverty are discussed.

**Yeung, W.J. and Hofferth, S.L. 1998. Family adaptations to income and job loss in the U.S. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues* 19(3):255-283.**

Using data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, this study examines the extent to which families experience major economic setbacks and how they respond. Families that experience a substantial loss of income or work hours are more likely to cut back on expenditures, receive public assistance, experience divorce or separation, and move. No evidence that partners are able to compensate for a major income loss by increasing their work hours was found. Initial conditions, such as income and assets, the unemployment rate of the area, and race, affect how a family adapts. Families with fewer resources and those who live in areas of high unemployment are more likely to rely on public assistance, and they are less likely to move, increase the work hours of the female head of household, or cut food expenditures.

**Glanz, K., Basil, M., Maibach, E., Goldberg, J., and Snyder, D. 1998. Why Americans eat what they do: Taste, nutrition, cost, convenience, and weight control concerns as influences on food consumption. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 98(10):1118-1126.**

Knowing why people choose to eat what they do can help dietetics professionals optimize the effectiveness of nutrition messages. The authors of this study used 2 self-administered questionnaires to gather data from a national sample of nearly 3,000 adults. They found that taste is the most influential factor driving the decision of what to eat, followed by cost. Respondents fell into particular health lifestyle clusters, and membership in these clusters predicted the importance of nutrition and weight control on food choices. Demographic differences and health lifestyles were predictors of the consumption of fruits and vegetables, fast foods, cheese, and breakfast cereal, the 4 main outcome measures. These results suggest that nutrition messages should stress taste and value to be most effective.

**Ferrucci, L., Izmirlian, G., Leveille, S., Phillips, C.L., Corti, M-C., Brock, D.B., and Guralnik, J.M. 1999. Smoking, physical activity, and active life expectancy. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 149(7):645-653.**

The effect of smoking and physical activity on active and disabled life expectancy was estimated using data from the Established Populations for Epidemiologic Studies of the Elderly (EPESE). Population-based samples of persons aged  $\geq 65$  years from the East Boston, Massachusetts, New Haven,

Connecticut, and Iowa sites of the EPESE were assessed at baseline between 1981 and 1983 and followed for mortality and disability over six annual follow-ups. A total of 8,604 persons without disability at baseline were classified as "ever" or "never" smoker and doing "low," "moderate," or "high" level physical activity. Active and disabled life expectancies were estimated using a Markov chain model. Compared with smokers, men and women nonsmokers survived 1.6-3.9 and 1.6-3.6 years longer, respectively, depending on level of physical activity. When smokers were disabled and close to death, most nonsmokers were still nondisabled. Physical activity, from low to moderate to high, was significantly associated with more years of life expectancy in both smokers (9.5, 10.5, 12.9 years in men and 11.1, 12.6, 15.3 years in women at age 65) and nonsmokers (11.0, 14.4, 16.2 years in men and 12.7, 16.2, 18.4 years in women at age 65). Higher physical activity was associated with fewer years of disability prior to death. These findings provide strong and explicit evidence that refraining from smoking and doing regular physical activity predict a long and healthy life.